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life gets its supreme worth and validity through this coming here into immediate touch with the Divine. We are immediately aware of this contact, and at the same time are aware of our own freedom and of the inviolate nature of our own personality. How are we to relate and connect these convictions? How explain the possibility of a truly free personality which is at the same time utterly dependent upon the all-supporting spirit which gives to it the significance and value it possesses? These questions seem vital to Eucken in a philosophical regard. He meets them by renouncing the possibility of theory, and refers the questioner to the very experience which he is seeking to explain. These are simply fundamental convictions which defy explanation, but which the truly spiritual life will verify and attest. This is distinctly discouraging to that form of "heroic spiritual activity" in which men strive after the clear understanding of experience. Those upon whom this burden is laid are not likely to gain much from Eucken's "Philosophy of Life." For such the *solvitur in ambulando* formula, worthy and even, as here, inspiring in its own sphere, has hitherto proved but an empty spell, and we do not share Mr. Boyce Gibson's expectation that it may be otherwise in time to come.

Mr. Gibson's exposition was originally given as a series of lectures, and in point of form the book suffers manifestly from the circumstances of its origin. In spirit and tone, however, it is attractive, and the reader can hardly fail to be favorably impressed by the competence of the author for his task, both in the matter of zeal and of knowledge.

ALEXANDER MAIR.

LIVERPOOL.

POETRY AND THE INDIVIDUAL. By Hartley B. Alexander. New York: Putnams, 1906. Pp. vii, 233.

Mr. Alexander seeks, in this delightful essay, to analyze the imaginative life in the department of human thought in which the idealizing motive is most manifest, namely, in the poetic instinct, the chief of the "arts," the most perfect expression of beauty. He believes that we need a sort of rebaptism of the Platonic spirit in a *humanization* of our philosophical interests, and writes this essay as a corroboration of the claims of beauty to measure the worth of life.

That there is testimony to the worth of life even in the despairing words of the pessimist is proven by the very despair itself, for pessimism does not appear so long as it is a question merely of the maintenance of life and not of its valuation. The savage tribes produce no Schopenhauers. Pessimism appears "when the struggle for *mere* existence has become transformed into a struggle for *ideal* existence." It is regarded by the author as a sort of impatience of spirit which the large cosmism of Plato's thought would cure.

But the final worth of life is not static. It must be found in life's work. The *summum bonum* must be an indefectible good, never declining into satiety. It must exist for its own sake, and be of eternal, unwearied potency in its appeal to the imagination of men. Only beauty (Plato's *καὶ ὁ δὲ*) fulfils these conditions. Material goods, intellect, emotions, morality, religion, all exist as means only to the final good. In beauty only do we "come to rest."

With great skill of reason and wealth of illustration the author analyzes the springs of poetry in the human consciousness and the forms of poetry in human society. He finds lyric poetry "the most perfect of all expressions of spiritual life," because fitted by its very "ideality of abstraction and its crystal purity" for the "reflection of what is final in human nature." The dramatist bears the same relation to the sculptor as the reflective poet bears to the painter: the former works "in three dimensions"; there is objectivity in his creation, a "fuller freeing of the product from the self." But the painter *suggests* on his level canvas the depths which the sculptor measures by dividers and rule. The dramatic or epic composition is man's estimate of man; the lyric cry is "man's measure of God."

Mr. Alexander is a firm champion of individualism in the higher life of the spirit. He dissents from Francis Gummere in the opinion that the poetic impulse is a product of social consciousness. Rather has the latter been educated to such degree of freedom from the hoarse and inarticulate cry of the mob as it now possesses through the ideal personality (the Platonic universal), which sheds upon it an influence transcendental, magnetic, saving. So Mr. Alexander arrives, by his doctrine of the individual and personal as the measure of the worth of life, at the paradoxical truth that "in exalting the ephemeral the permanent is won." If the content of life is social as well as individual

it is because "sociability is a feature of (a function of) individuality."

The book is charmingly written, though it is very close reading. Precision of language and suggestiveness of figure save many a page from a style that would be both obscure and tedious in the discussion of its postulates by a less gifted literary craftsman. The moral tone of the book is lofty, and some of the passages of appeal to a life of freedom under the inspiration of beauty rise to the sublimity of prophetic fervor.

D. S. MUZZEY.

NEW YORK.

THE CHILDREN OF THE NATION. By Sir John Gorst. London: Methuen & Co.

Dedicated to the Labor Members of the House of Commons, this volume deals in a comprehensive way with the pressing problems of child life which are crying for solution at the present day.

Infant mortality, the phenomena of overworked and underfed, diseased and derelict children are dealt with in turn, and preventive and remedial measures suggested and discovered.

The author brings home to us in a simple, forcible way, the terrible waste of human life which goes on in our midst. Children are born to our country, we speak of them as valuable national assets, perhaps even recognize, though dimly, that they *are* the nation that is to be, and yet we neglect them. How many are born only to die through lack of common care in infancy, how many more grow up to be a burden to themselves and to society—a continual source of weakness to the nation—by reason of preventible disease and lack of physical, mental and moral nurture!

Sir John Gorst reminds us that by the laws of our country, children have a right to be maintained by others until they are able to maintain themselves. This responsibility rests, in the first place, on the parents, but in case of their inability or neglect to discharge it, children have a legal claim on the State.

That children belong not to the family, but to the nation, probably few would now deny. It is when we leave this broad platform of general statement and descend to particulars that controversy begins. What are the respective duties and limits